

Wisconsin Student Assessment System  
Extended Grade Band Standards

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# Reading, Mathematics, and Science

**Grades 3 through 8 and 10 for Reading and Mathematics  
and Grades 4, 8, and 10 for Science**



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# Extended Grade Band Standards Reading, Mathematics, and Science



This document can be found on the Web at:  
<http://dpi.state.wi.gov/sped/assmt-waa.html>

*Wisconsin's Model Academic Standards* can be found on the Web at:  
<http://dpi.wi.gov/standards/>



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# General Introduction

The Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction (DPI) contracted with Edvantia to simultaneously develop extended standards, instructional achievement descriptors, and alternate assessment achievement descriptors for reading, mathematics, and science. Wisconsin educators and DPI staff worked with Edvantia staff (Kimberly Hambrick) and Edvantia National Faculty member (Jan Sheinker) April-June of 2007. This document represents the outcome and final report of their efforts.

The Wisconsin Extended Grade Band Standards are linked to the Wisconsin Academic Content Standards for reading, mathematics, and science and to grade-level objectives from the Wisconsin Assessment Frameworks. To make this link to grade-level objectives clear, the term Extended Grade Band Objectives is used in this document.

Extended grade bands include two contiguous grade levels that produce a single set of extended grade band objectives. Extended grade band objectives link to Grades 3 and 4, Grades 5 and 6, and Grades 7 and 8 reading and mathematics. These grade band objectives represent the grade-level expectations for students who take the alternate assessment in the specified grade level. Because the progression of expectations across the grades for this population is difficult to differentiate for each individual grade level, the DPI deemed the specification of grade band expectations more appropriate. Extended grade objectives were set for Grade 10, a single grade level, because this is the grade level at which general education students are tested and, therefore, the only grade at which alternate assessments are required for high school. Extended grade objectives were set for Grades 4, 8, and 10 in science.

A committee of DPI staff and general educators, special educators, and content specialists from across the state gathered to determine the essence of the Wisconsin Model Academic Standards and grade-level objectives and subskills found in the Wisconsin Assessment Frameworks. These form the basis for these Extended Grade Band Objectives. Committee members considered the grade-level objectives and subskills in the Assessment Frameworks for both grades in their grade bands to determine the linking extended grade band objectives. In Grade 10, the Assessment Framework for high school Grade 10 grade-level objectives and subskills was used to determine the linking extended grade band objectives.

Committees also developed instructional achievement descriptors for each of the Extended Grade Band Objectives. Instructional achievement descriptors were defined for Minimal, Basic, Proficient, and Advanced performance levels. The Proficient level was aligned with the Extended Grade Band Objective. Committees defined target content and skills for each level of achievement, from Minimal to Advanced. For each target skill, committees developed examples to show how students might demonstrate achievement of the performance level. These examples were intended to provide an achievement ladder for students working toward proficiency (Proficient) on the Extended Grade Band Objectives and onward (Advanced) toward the grade-level content and skills to which they are linked. The examples also were intended to help teachers envision how the broad range of students with significant cognitive disabilities might perform the same content, despite the challenges their disabilities might present.

Finally, alternate assessment achievement descriptors were developed for each grade band. These alternate assessment achievement descriptors provide a bridge between the Extended Grade Band Objectives and the alternate assessments aligned with them. These descriptors are intended to guide the development of the test blueprint, the development of items and tasks that measure the full range of achievement, and the setting of cut scores during standard setting for the assessment. The focus of an alternate assessment in a standards-based system is on achievement that aligns with extended standards linked to grade-level content.

Together, this system of standards and descriptors is designed to allow students with significant cognitive disabilities to progress toward state standards linked to grade-level expectations while beginning at each student's present level of performance. From the classroom to the assessment, the relationships of standards and assessment to teaching and learning are depicted for use by teachers, assessment designers, and the users of alternate assessment results.

## **NCLB Guidance**

The committee's work was guided by the United States Department of Education's *Standards and Assessments Peer Review Guidance: Information and Examples for Meeting Requirements of the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001* (Peer Review Guidance) which requires alternate academic achievement standards aligned with the alternate assessment:

- must include knowledge and skills that link to grade-level expectations;
- must promote access to the general curriculum; and
- must reflect professional judgment of the highest learning standards possible for the group of students with the most significant cognitive disabilities.

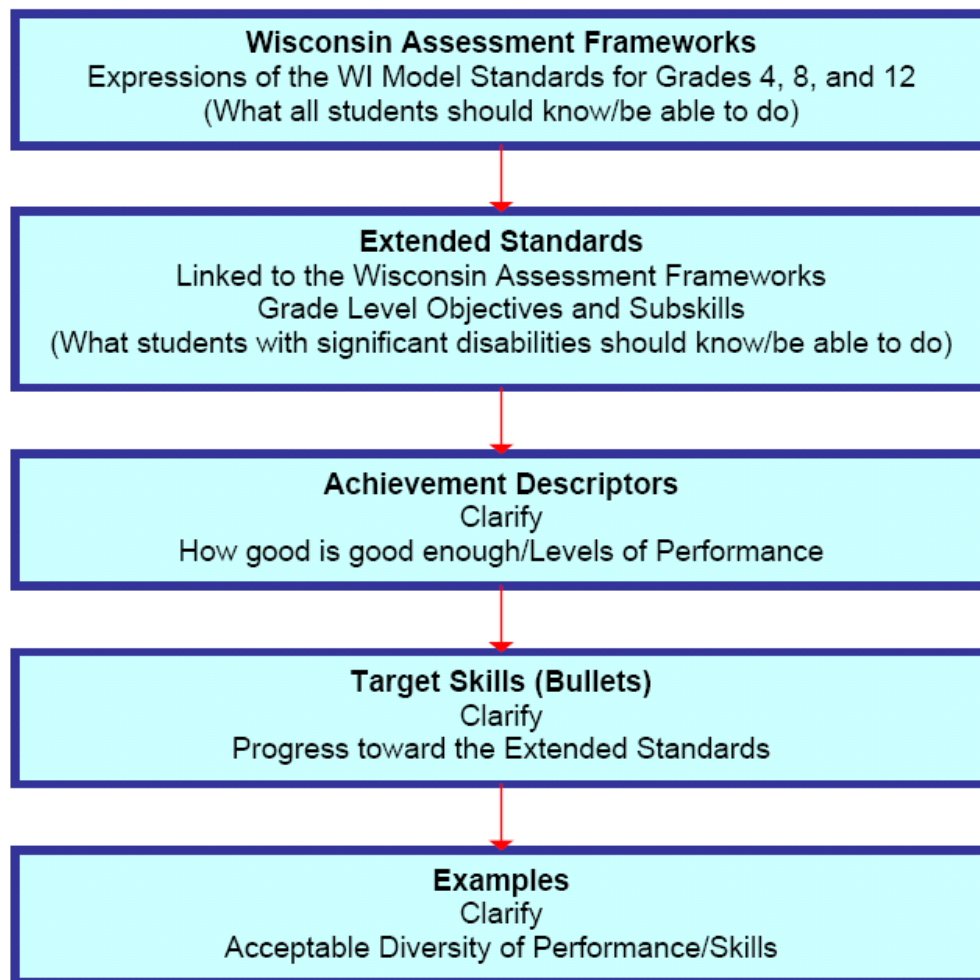
Although the grade-level content may be reduced in complexity or modified to reflect prerequisite skills, the link to grade-level standards must be clear. The academic standards are written for Grades 4, 8, and 12. The assessment frameworks are expressions of the standards at each tested grade level. The extended standards are based on these frameworks and, therefore, on the state standards.

The Peer Review Guidance notes that the concept of alternate achievement standards related to grade level may be ambiguous. According to the guidance, these extended standards

- should be defined in a way that supports individual growth because of their linkage to different content across grades;
- are not likely to show the same clearly defined advances in cognitive complexity as the general education standards when examined across grade levels;
- should rely on the judgment of experienced special educators and administrators, higher education representatives, and parents of students with disabilities as they define alternate achievement standards; and
- should provide an appropriate challenge for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities as they move through their schooling.

## **Relationship of the Wisconsin Extended Grade Band Objectives to the Wisconsin Model Academic Standards**

The new guidance requires the link to grade-level standards. The Wisconsin Extended Grade Band Objectives have been developed to differentiate knowledge and skills by Grade Band to clarify the link between the Extended Grade Band Objectives and the general education standards, and to show a forward progression across grades and years of instruction that reflect different priorities for instruction and learning as these students grow older. The diagram below illustrates that relationship.



The differences from grade band to grade band are necessarily subtle and progression is sometimes more horizontal than vertical; that is, the differences represent the teaching and learning of added skills that are not as clearly higher from one grade to the next as those found in the general education standards. To the degree possible, however, skills do escalate at the proficient and advanced levels across the grades.

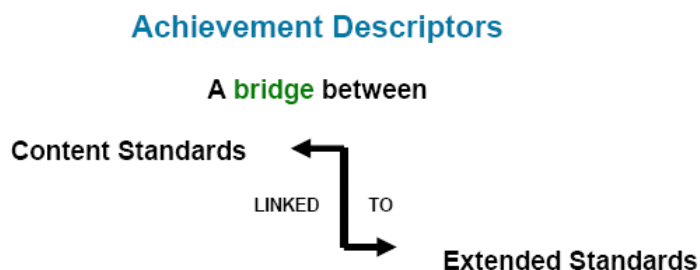
## **Relationship to the Wisconsin Alternate Assessment**

The Wisconsin Extended Grade Band Objectives and Instructional Achievement Descriptors serve two functions. Instructionally, they give teachers more information about the level of knowledge and skills they are building in their students. The Extended Grade Band Objectives clarify links between the

Wisconsin Model Content Standards and the grade-level objectives and subskills found in the Wisconsin Assessment Frameworks to the Alternate Achievement Descriptors. For purposes of the Wisconsin Alternate Assessment, the achievement descriptors provide a useful link between the Extended Grade Band Objectives and the Alternate Assessment. The descriptors provide guidance for developing an assessment so that a full range of performance is measured and for setting score ranges within each level. The Extended Grade Band Objectives and alternate achievement descriptors are designed to do the following:

- standardize meaning for the extended grade band content and skill expectations;
- create consistency in expected performance;
- emphasize skill similarities for all students participating in the alternate assessment;
- accommodate diverse disabilities; and
- ground alternate assessments in a consistent set of expectations.

Achievement descriptors are used to categorize and explain student performance both in the course of instruction and on the statewide alternate assessment. The diagram below illustrates this relationship.



**Aligned with  
State Alternate Assessment**

- **Guide the development of the blueprint**
  - Development of the item pool/tasks
  - Measurement of full range of performance
- **Ensures “front-end alignment”**

The alternate assessment achievement descriptors describe the thresholds and summarize the key performances of students who perform each of the achievement levels on the assessment. The Proficient level descriptors align with the Extended Grade Band Objectives that are linked to the grade-level objectives.

### **System Alignment**

The Wisconsin Extended Grade Band Objectives are intended to contribute to a fully aligned system of standards, curriculum, teaching, learning, technology, and assessment that ensures equity for all students in each classroom, school, and local education agency. The Extended Grade Band Objectives are vertically aligned and linked to the general education grade-level objectives.

The links to the Wisconsin Model Academic Standards and grade-level objectives are intended to increase access to the general curriculum for all students with disabilities. Examples provided for instructional achievement descriptors at each level of achievement are designed for special education and general education classroom teachers to use in working with special education students with significant cognitive disabilities. The examples help teachers evaluate a student's progress toward the Extended Grade Band Objectives as well as illuminate the kinds of performance that indicate various levels of achievement.

As teachers use the Extended Grade Band Objectives and instructional achievement descriptors to guide teaching practice toward academic content areas, the objectives reframe the expectations for foundational skills in pre-academic and academic areas. Prerequisite skills and the unique enabling skills related to this population in the areas of reading, mathematics, and science content are specified in the context of their roles as a foundation for these students to achieve skills related to academic content.

Technology is particularly important to helping students with significant cognitive disabilities to access the general curriculum and achieve the extended standards. Although educators have traditionally viewed technology as hardware and software, assistive technology tenets provide a broader view of the applications of low, medium, and high levels of technology use. Assistive technology tools can be vital to helping a student acquire and demonstrate learning unimpeded by the barriers that the disability presents.

### **Content-Specific Concerns**

The unique characteristics of each content area result in some differences among their respective objectives and descriptors. In all content areas, there is not a one-to-one correspondence between the Extended Grade Band Objectives and the general education objectives or subskills, nor should there be. The population addressed by the Extended Grade Band Objectives consists of students with significant disabilities working on prerequisite or enabling skills for the general education objectives.

In the reading Extended Grade Band 7-8 Objectives and Extended Grade 10 Objectives, general education objectives Understand Text and Analyze Text are addressed by a single Extended Grade Band Objective. The committees felt that the appropriately linked extended objective was a prerequisite to both of these general education objectives.

The first general education objective—Mathematics Processes—was not addressed separately in the Extended Grade Band Objectives. Mathematics processes are necessarily performed as one performs mathematics content and skills. The application of these processes is embedded in the performance of the remaining mathematics extended objectives.

The first two general education science objectives—Science Connections and Nature of Science—were addressed by a single Extended Grade Objective at each grade. Consistent with the reporting for the general education assessment, the content and skills related to these general education objectives were perceived to be so interrelated for this population as to render the performance of these skills inseparable in the Extended Grade Objectives. The final two general education objectives—Science Applications and Science in Social and Personal Perspectives—were addressed together. In Grades 4 and 8, these combined general education objectives are addressed by a single Extended Grade Objective. In Grade 10, two Extended Grade Objectives address the combined general education objectives. Again, the content and skills related to these two general education objectives were perceived to be so interrelated for this population as to render the performance of these skills inseparable in the Extended Grade Objectives. These combinations are consistent with reporting for the general education assessments, where they are also combined.

## Levels of Performance

Within this document, each Extended Grade Band Objective is cross-referenced to one or several grade-level objectives.

Four performance levels have been proposed for Wisconsin's alternate academic achievement standards: Advanced, Proficient, Basic, and Minimal. *Mastery is considered to be demonstrated at Proficient and Advanced Levels* and is identified as meeting the proficient level specified in No Child Left Behind.

For each level, specific descriptions of content and skills or targeted skills are bulleted, and examples of performance for the target skill are provided. These extended standards, performance level descriptors with target skills, and examples are a resource for developing IEP goals and benchmarks and curricular materials in reading, mathematics, and science. Students may need goals and benchmarks in areas other than academic content domains (e.g., self-care/living skills, mobility). As always, IEPs address the individual needs of each student to make progress toward the standards.

# Directions for Interpreting Extended Grade Band Objectives

1. **Extended Grade Band Objectives** are statements that define what students with significant cognitive disabilities should know and be able to do at a grade band. Extended Grade Band Objectives in this document are a bridge for students with significant cognitive disabilities to the Wisconsin Academic Standards. Students who are able to perform these objectives proficiently and independently in any content area should continue their progress by learning and mastering the Wisconsin Academic Standards. The order in which Extended Grade Band Objectives are listed is not intended to convey a sequence for instruction, but rather progress across years. In the document, the left column contains the Extended Grade Band Objectives that link to the Wisconsin Academic Standards, Assessment Frameworks and grade-level objectives, and the right column contains the Achievement descriptors, related target skills for each level, and examples. Each Extended Grade Band Objective completes the phrase “Students will....”

Recognize length as long/short, weight as heavy/light, and temperature as hot/cold.

(Mathematics—Extended Grade Band Objective is an extension of and linked to Grade 5 Mathematics Content Standards Measurement)

2. **Bullets under performance levels** denote target skills or descriptions of instruction at that level for the content related to the extended standard.

Recognize length as long/short, weight as heavy/light, and temperature as hot/cold.

**Proficient** students perform without support the following:

- Recognize length as long/short, weight as heavy/light, and temperature as hot/cold.

3. **Examples** clarify certain components of Extended Grade Band Objectives or bullets. They are illustrative but not exhaustive. The examples suggest a range of ways in which a student may demonstrate progress toward the Extended Grade Band Objective.

Recognize length as long/short, weight as heavy/light, and temperature as hot/cold.

**Basic** students perform with minimal support the following:

- Recognize length as long/short, weight as heavy/light, and temperature as hot/cold.  
EX: Pick up a piece of paper and indicate if it is heavy or light.  
EX: Look at a piece of yarn and indicate if it is short or long.  
EX: Look at a picture of ice cream and indicate if it is hot or cold.





# Guide to Links and Alignment in the Document

The document is divided into two major sections to provide users with different levels of detail concerning the relationship of the Wisconsin Model Academic Standards and the grade-level objectives and subskills found in the Wisconsin Assessment Frameworks to the Extended Grade Band Objectives, Instructional Achievement Descriptors, and Draft Assessment Achievement Descriptors.

## Organization of the Body of the Document

In the main body of the document, links between the extended grade band objectives and the model standards and grade-level objectives are shown by listing them above the extended grade band objectives to which they are linked. Instructional achievement descriptors and examples appear in the table to the right of the linked extended grade band objectives. The proficient level instructional achievement descriptor is the same as the extended grade band objective to make clear that the extended grade band objective is the target for demonstrating proficiency in the objective. In cases where a single extended grade band objective addresses more than one grade-level objective, all grade-level objectives are listed above the table. These tables appear as follows:

### Model Academic Standards:

### Objectives:

Extended Grade Band (grade levels) Objectives	Instructional Achievement Descriptors
Extended grade band objective statement	Advanced students perform without support the following: • <b>Target skill description</b> EX: Example performance
	Proficient students perform without support the following: • <b>Target skill description</b> EX: Example performance
	Basic students perform with minimal support the following: • <b>Target skill description</b> EX: Example performance
	Minimal students perform with significant support the following: • <b>Target skill description</b> EX: Example performance

**Model Academic Standards** refers to Reading, Mathematics, or Science general education model academic standard.

**Objective(s)** refers to the general education grade-level objectives at which the standards are to be mastered by students.

**Extended Grade Band Objectives** are linked to the Model Academic Standards and Grade Level Objectives and refer to the expectations for students with significant disabilities.

**Instructional Achievement Descriptors** describe expectations for four levels of performance. The proficient level descriptor is aligned with the Extended Grade Band Objective.

**Examples** are provided for each descriptor to show how students with significant disabilities might demonstrate their knowledge or skill mastery.

## Overall Grade Band Alternate Assessment Achievement Descriptors

At the end of each Grade Band for each content area is a table that contains the alternate assessment achievement descriptors. These descriptors represent thresholds for performance at the Advanced, Proficient, and Basic levels and typical performance for students at the Minimal level. Students whose performances fall below the threshold for Basic would fall into the Minimal level.

<b>Achievement Level</b>	<b>Achievement Descriptor</b>
<b>Advanced</b>	Students performing at the Advanced Level: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>•</li></ul>
<b>Proficient</b>	Students performing at the Proficient Level: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>•</li></ul>
<b>Basic</b>	Students performing at the Basic Level: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>•</li></ul>
<b>Minimal</b>	Students performing at the Minimal Level: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>•</li></ul>

**Achievement Levels** define the levels of performance students may achieve when performing the extended standards as measured by the Alternate Assessment.

**Achievement Descriptors** describe the content, skills, and processes that students typically demonstrate at each achievement level.

At the end of each Grade Band for each content area is a table that contains the alternate assessment achievement descriptors. These performance level descriptors represent thresholds for performance at the advanced, proficient, and basic levels, and typical performance for students at the minimal level. This summary is intended to help parents, educators, and others understand what children who score at a given performance level on the WAA are expected to know and be able to do at the time of testing. This information may be useful as one component of program planning and evaluation, but should be interpreted cautiously and in the context of other available information when applied to individual students.